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Message Text

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SUBJECT: TO VIMA REPORTS U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO BE WITH-
DRAWN FROM GREECE AND TURKEY

REF: ATHENS 4083

1. FOLLOWING ARE PERTINENT EXCERPTS FROM THE ARTICLE "THE NEW NUKES" WHICH APPEARED IN THE MAY 31 ISSUE OF "THE NEW REPUBLIC." BEGIN TEXT.

"HOW DOES THE UNITED STATES CUT BACK ITS BLOATED, AGING AND DANGEROUS NATO STOCKPILE OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AT A MOMENT WHEN ANY REDUCTIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE, GREECE AND TURKEY -- EVEN RATIONAL ONES -- MIGHT BE PIC-
TURED AS A SIGN OF POST-VIETNAM WEAKNESS?
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"ONE WAY IS TO KEEP IT QUIET -- AND THAT SEEMS TO BE WHAT'S GOING ON WITH REDUCTIONS OF SOME WEAPONS IN GREECE AND TURKEY. ANOTHER WAY IS TO DESCRIBE REPLACEMENT OF "UNUSABLE" NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH "MORE REALISTIC" CONVEN-

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TIONAL ONES AS A STEP ENABLED BY TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENT AND RESULTING IN SAVING MONEY. THAT APPARENTLY IS WHAT IS BEING ARGUED AS THE US BEGINS TO SUBSTITUTE NEW LASER-GUIDED CONVENTIONAL BOMBS FOR OLDER, TACTICAL NUCLEAR

BOMBS. FINALLY, CUTBACKS ARE BEING MADE IN THE NAME OF SECURITY. SOME TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS -- ARTILLERY AND ATOMIC ANTI-DEMOLITION MINES IN PARTICULAR -- HAVE BEEN STORED IN ISOLATED PLACES NEAR THE BORDERS OF COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. THERE THEY COULD BE SUBJECT TO SEIZURE BY A WARSAW PACT SURPRISE ATTACK OR BY TERRORISTS, THE LATTER CONSIDERED MORE LIKELY SINCE THE GUERRILLA'S MUNICH RAID.

"SEVERAL HUNDRED TACTICAL FIGHTER PLANES, SUCH AS F-4S, STAND AT THE END OF RUNWAYS ON 15-MINUTE ALERT IN MOST NATO COUNTRIES, LOADED WITH TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS. CALLED QUICK REACTION ALERT AIRCRAFT (QRA), THEY ARE PILOTED BY BOTH US AND NATO COUNTRY AIRMEN AND PREVENTED FROM BEING LAUNCHED BY AN AMERICAN GUARD AND KNOWLEDGE THAT THE NUCLEAR WEAPON IS NOT OPERATIONAL. THAT SUPPOSEDLY CAN ONLY BE DONE AFTER THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES ORDERS THE PLANES TO ATTACK AND THE WEAPONS ARE ACTIVATED USING A SPECIAL CODE KNOWN ONLY BY US CUSTODIAL PERSONNEL.

"AT ONE TIME QRA AIRCRAFT GAVE VISIBLE ASSURANCE TO AMERICA'S NATO ALLIES THAT AMERICA WAS PREPARED TO AID THEM SHORT OF A STRATEGIC NUCLEAR EXCHANGE. IT ALSO PROVIDED AN ALLIED "FINGER ON THE TRIGGER," SINCE NATO PILOTS ALONG WITH AMERICANS WERE INVOLVED. NOWADAYS QRA AIRCRAFT LOOK LESS REASSURING. IN GREECE AND TURKEY INCIDENTS DURING THE CYPRUS WAR AND GREEK REVOLUTIONS HAVE LED TO A DECISION TO "DOWNLOAD" THE QRA AIRCRAFT IN THOSE COUNTRIES. THE WEAPONS THAT ONCE HUNG UNARMED FROM THE ALERT FIGHTERS HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO HEAVILY GUARDED STORAGE AREAS.

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"NOW A FURTHER STEP IS BEING PLANNED -- IF IT HAS NOT ALREADY BEGUN. SOME NUCLEAR BOMBS AND ATOMIC ARTILLERY SHELLS IN GREECE AND TURKEY ARE COMING OUT. FOR ONE THING, THERE ARE MORE NUCLEAR BOMBS THERE THAN AIRCRAFT TO USE THEM. SHOULD A NUCLEAR EXCHANGE TAKE PLACE, IT IS CERTAIN THAT GREECE AND TURKEY-BASED NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT WOULD BE AMONG THE FIRST TARGETS FOR SOVIET MISSILES. AIRFIELDS IN THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD ALSO BE ATTACKED. THERE WOULD BE NO SECOND CHANCE FOR PLANES TO GO BACK TO REARM ONCE THEIR PAYLOADS HAVE BEEN DISCHARGED.

"RECENT ACTIONS BY BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY AGAINST US BASE INTERESTS HAVE ALSO MOTIVATED THE PRESENT RECONSIDERATION. IN GREECE, FOR EXAMPLE, DURING THE LAST COUP US

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PLANES AND SHIPS WERE REFUSED PERMISSION TO LAND FOR SOME
TIME. BEFORE THAT CAN HAPPEN AGAIN, THE US WANTS TO TAKE
SOME NUCLEAR WEAPONS OUT SO THAT REMOVING ALL OUR WEAPONS

WON'T BE TOO DIFFICULT A JOB SHOULD ANOTHER CRISIS ARISE.

"LATE LAST MONTH SEN. JOHN PASTORE, CHAIRMAN OF THE
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ATOMIC ENERGY AND NO DOVE, TOOK TO
THE SENATE FLOOR TO DISCUSS THE CHANGING STATUS OF TAC-
TICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS. USING VAGUE LANGUAGE APPROPRIATE
TO THE SUBJECT, PASTORE DECLARED, '...WITHOUT GETTING
INTO IT BECAUSE THIS IS HIGHLY SENSITIVE, WE ARE NOW
PRESENTED WITH A SITUATION WHERE ATHENS HAS ALREADY AN-
NOUNCED THAT WE CANNOT USE CERTAIN BASES IN GREECE ANY-
MORE. WE HAD THE SITUATION IN TURKEY WITH REFERENCE TO
CYPRUS, AND I AM TELLING THE SENATE IT IS ABOUT TIME WE
TURNED A NEW PAGE AND BEGAN TO LOOK A BIT MORE DEEPLY
INTO THESE COMMITMENTS WE HAVE MADE...' PASTORE THEN
CALLED 'FOR A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IN NATO COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY WHERE THE USEFULNESS IN
THE EVENT OF WAR IS HIGHLY QUESTIONABLE.'

"THOUGH PASTORE AND OTHERS FOCUSED ON THE POLITICAL
INSTABILITY OF THE US NUCLEAR POSITION IN GREECE AND TUR-
KEY, THEY ALSO STRESSED THE NEWEST TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAP-
ONS WORRY -- FEAR NUCLEAR WARHEADS MIGHT BE STOLEN BY
TERRORISTS. DURING HIS RECENT FLOOR STATEMENT PASTORE
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PLACED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD A DECLASSIFIED VERSION
OF A REPORT HE AND SEN. HOWARD BAKER PREPARED AFTER A
1973 TRIP TO INSPECT THE SECURITY OF NATO NUCLEAR WEAPONS.
THE TWO SENATORS AT THAT TIME FOUND IN ONE COUNTRY NUCLEAR
WEAPONS WERE 'LOCATED IN THE BASEMENT OF A BUILDING WHICH
CONTAINS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES.' THERE WAS NO OUTER
PERIMETER FENCE AS IS NORMALLY THE CASE FOR NUCLEAR SITES,
AND A GUARD AT THE BASEMENT ENTRANCE 'WAS POSTED FOR THE
FIRST TIME, THE DAY THE (SENATORS) VISITED THE BUILDING.'

"IN A RECENT REPORT TO CONGRESS, DEFENSE SECRETARY
JAMES SCHLESINGER SAID THE US HAS CALLED FOR A MORE DE-
TAILED LONG-TERM ANALYSIS OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS
'IN LIGHT OF DEPLOYING MODERNIZED CONVENTIONAL AIR MUNI-
TIONS' SUCH AS THE NEW GUIDED BOMBS. IN HIS EARLIER
POSTURE STATEMENT, SCHLESINGER HAD SAID CONSIDERATION
SHOULD BE GIVEN TO 'REPLACING THE EXISTING STOCKPILES
WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND DELIVERY SYSTEMS MORE APPROPRIATE
TO THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT.'

"ARE NEW WEAPONS THE PRICE THAT MUST BE PAID TO CUT
BACK THE OLD? POSSIBLY. IT MAY BE A NECESSARY TRADE.
IN HEARINGS BEFORE THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

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ALMOST A YEAR AGO, FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
PAUL WARNKE AGREED THAT DETERRENCE WAS THE PRIME ROLE OF

US NATO NUCLEAR WEAPONS BECAUSE THEY ADDED 'TO THE OVERALL
PLAUSIBILITY OF A NUCLEAR REACTION IN THE EVENT OF A PRO-
TRACTED CONVENTIONAL SOVIET ATTACK.' BUT, WARNKE ADDED,
'...I FEEL IT IS QUITE REALISTIC TO PHASE DOWN THE NUMBER
FROM THE PRESENT NUMBER OF 7000 TO SOMETHING LIKE 1000 OR
LESS ... I THINK THE EUROPEANS WOULD ACCEPT THAT PROVIDED
THAT THEY RECOGNIZED AGAIN THAT THIS WAS NOT THE BEGINNING
OF THE END AND WAS NOT AN INDICATION OF A WANING OF AMERI-
CAN INTEREST.' THIS SEEMS TO BE THE PATH WE ARE NOW ON.'
END TEXT.

2. FULL ARTICLE BEING AIRMAILED TODAY. INGERSOLL

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